

VERMONT TELEGRAPH.

[TWO DOLLARS PER ANNUM.]

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENCE OF THE GOSPEL."

[PAYABLE WITHIN FOUR MONTHS.]

BY ORSON S. MURRAY.

BRANDON, WEDNESDAY, NOV. 23, 1842.

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MISCELLANY.

From the Vergennes Vermonter. CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.

To the Editor:—In contemplating the infliction of a capital punishment, the thought that strikes the mind with overwhelming force is, the immortality of the soul. That the being whose natural life is about to be cut off by an act of his fellow men has a soul that is to live through-out Eternity—that the endless happiness or interminable misery of that soul depends upon its character while yet connected with its bodily tenement—that it is destined forever to enjoy the blissful society of Angels and the spirits of just men made perfect, or doomed to be the ceaseless companion of devils in the regions of darkness and despair, according as its state may be when the mortal puts on immortality. Almost the entire population of these United States, who are capable of forming any religious belief, profess to hold these sentiments; and also that the grand object of the benevolent Creator in placing man in this state of being is, to give him an opportunity to prepare by a course of moral training, for the inconceivable felicity which is the reward of sincere repentance for past errors and future faithful obedience to the requirements of the Divine law: and that consequently, whatever may be our duties and responsibilities growing out of the various relations we hold to our fellow creatures, we are ever to bear in mind this primary object of our present state of existence, both as it regards ourselves and others; and our highest wisdom, as well as our most important duty is to direct our untiring and vigilant efforts, in our own behalf and in behalf of our fellow creatures to this great end; inasmuch as all the temporal interests of the Universe are not to be compared with the Eternal destiny of a single immortal soul. And yet while professing all this men will presume to cut the thread of life and send an immortal soul to its final account, red with the blood of a fellow man and loaded with an accumulation of guilt sufficient to crush it to the lowest depths of eternal misery. What a responsibility for a fallible man to assume! Thus to wrest from the hand of Jehovah the prerogative of determining to every human being the length of his probation. Thus to interfere in the arrangement of his government and frustrate if possible, his designs in regard to the most important relation existing between him and his creatures.

It is said in reply to considerations like these "that they are true and worthy of all the importance here attached to them, and because of their truth and importance is Capital Punishment insisted on.—That because of the value of human life and of the awful consequence which may follow from cutting it off prematurely.—That it is better that one murderer should perish than that a whole community should be endangered; that his escaping this penalty would encourage crime, while his execution would exert a salutary restraint over other vicious persons which no other form of punishment would effect."

This, however, is begging the question and that too in the face both of philosophy and facts. I have endeavored to show, in the course of the discussion (with what success, I leave your readers to judge,) that Capital Punishment in this country does not and cannot from the nature of the case and the state of public opinion afford adequate protection to human life; and I have produced evidence of a nature which cannot be doubted and of a character that will not be questioned, to prove that the mitigation of the criminal laws of other countries has been attended with increased safety to life. If this be true (and it is not, I should like to be shown the fallacy of my arguments or the error of the testimony with which I have endeavored to sustain my position,) how can this plea be urged in justification of an act fraught with such tremendous consequences?—And besides, admitting that human life would be less secure without the Capital Punishment of the murderer, the argument in favor of its abolition arising from the immortality and inestimable value of the soul remains good; for if the future state of man is the object of paramount interest, every other consideration sinks into insignificance before it; and there is every reason to suppose that the soul of the assassin is more unfit for the final change than that of his victim. At least we know the murderer is not prepared to go, and go he must, without any reference to his reputation, within the short period allotted him by his earthly tribunal, and in respect to his victim, we cannot know in all cases whether he is prepared, or not. There is, certainly, greater reason to hope in the case of the destroyed than in that of the destroyer.

Another argument against Capital Punishment, which it appears to me, should press with weight upon every one who is liable to be engaged in carrying out the provisions of the law in relation to that subject is the fallibility of all human tribunals, and the uncertainty of human testimony. This fallibility of judgment and this liability to error in weighing the relative merits of conflicting testimony is greatest in determining questions which have to be settled by circumstantial evidence; and that is often the only evidence to be obtained in cases of a capital nature, for the obvious reason, that men seek privacy for the perpetration of deeds which subject them to infamy or severe punishment. It should be remembered too, that

in no other cases is the temptation to perjury so strong as in those of this class.—The witnesses being not unfrequently themselves the guilty individuals, who are led to add the crime of perjury to their previous guilt in order to shield them from its penalty. In view of these considerations and of the fact that judges and jurors of the most upright intentions are often deceived, how fearful is the responsibility of participating in any manner in the infliction of a penalty which can never be revoked—of being, in any way accessory to the death of an innocent person. Were the penalty any thing besides death, the wrong might be in a measure at least, repaired, when the error was detected which led to the infliction of it; but in the case of the execution of an innocent man, no possibility remains of repairing the injury. He has suffered an ignominious death and "no reparation can possibly be made to him—no proper recompense or equivalent can be rendered to his family."

Who is the guilty person? Who can be found to make the requisite atonement? The witnesses may be innocent; the judges and jurors may be deceived; the State's Attorney, Governor, Sheriff and hangman are the mere instruments to execute the law; the Legislators who enacted it, do but represent the will of their constituents. The guilt lies upon the community and upon them rest the consequences.

Many instances of the kind above referred to are on record, which strikingly illustrate the preceding remarks. I will only mention a few cases, two of which occurred in our state.

In one case the accused was condemned on circumstantial evidence, and had even been induced to confess himself guilty of murdering a man, who, by a fortunate concurrence of circumstances was found alive only a few days prior to that appointed for his execution.

The other was that of the two Bourns or Bourns. "They were indicted for the murder of Russel Colvin, and were convicted mainly on their own confessions. Yet before the sentence of the law could be executed upon them, the identical Colvin appeared alive! Had the Bourns been hanged, what mind could conceive, or tongue, or pen described the feelings of the jurors who declared them guilty!"

"The case of the uncle, related by Lord Halet is a very strong one. His niece had been heard to cry out 'Good uncle, do not kill me,' and soon afterwards disappeared; and he being suspected of having destroyed her for the sake of her property, was required to produce her before the justices of assize. Being unable to do this (for she absconded) but hoping to avert suspicions, he procured another girl resembling his niece, and attempted to pass her off as such. The fraud was, however, detected; and together with other circumstances, appeared so strongly to indicate the guilt of the uncle, that he was convicted and executed for the supposed murder of his niece, who, as it afterwards turned out, was still living."

When Miner, the youth who was convicted of the murder of Mr. Chapman, was in prison, awaiting his execution, he boldly declared his innocence. When on the scaffold, the rope about his neck, his arms tied by his side; when he had prayed to God to receive his spirit, bade farewell to the clergymen, and was about to be swung off, he said with a firm voice, but with despair written upon every line of his face, "Poor Miner, he die innocent, he die innocent!" In another moment he was in eternity. That declaration we heard says a writer who witnessed the execution; and the words ring in our ears now, and will while we live, for the impression can never be effaced from our memory. Miner was either unjustly condemned or he died with a lie on his tongue, and one contingency is no less awful than the other. It is in fact appalling to the soul to think of sending an unclean spirit before the God of spirits; and no less appalling to brand an innocent man with the stain of murder and cut him off in the season of youth from all the duties and enjoyments of life."

Many similar cases might be recited, did my limits permit; but enough has been given to sicken the heart, and, one would think, to deter a conscientious man from all participation in the conviction or execution of Capital Punishment.

Row'd T. ROBINSON.
11th Mo. 6th, 1842.

The celebrated John Randolph, in one of his letters to a young relative, says, "I know nothing that I am so anxious you should acquire as the faculty of saying 'no.' You must expect unreasonable requests to be presented to you every day of your life, and must endeavor to deny with as much facility and kindness as you acquire."

The cultivation of rice is attracting attention in Louisiana. The very successful experiments made by W. Y. Lewis, Esq. of New Orleans, leave no room to doubt that the rice culture can be advantageously prosecuted in various sections of that State.

The value of the Croton water for the extinguishment of fires, is already very perceptible. Since it was introduced into the city, we have had about the usual number of fires, but with very little destruction of property. Water being always at hand, and easily sent up to the tops of the highest buildings, an extensive conflagration is nearly out of the question.

VERMONT TELEGRAPH.

Saturday, Nov. 19, 1842.

For the Vermont Telegraph. THE ORDINANCES.

Reply to J. Baldwin.

Friend Murray:—What has been published in the Telegraph on this subject, is now before me. The question—"Do you think that Christ designed to have water baptism and the last supper that he gave his disciples, continued beyond the apostolic age?"

Your first reply, (No. 43, Vol. 14.) "In regard to brother Baldwin's question, I say frankly and honestly, that it asks for my opinion on a point where I am at present unable to form an opinion."

You remark, "Let no one be alarmed at this. Let all examine the matter for themselves," &c. You then ask, "Have all done this? Do all understand this matter as well as they think they do?" And you say, "There is nothing like dealing faithfully with ourselves, faithfully with one another, and faithfully towards the Father of our spirits."

Again—"I have feared, (you say,) because I have been taught to fear—to let my mind run out freely after all truth. . . . We have been taught that examination of distinguishing dogmas was sacrilege—that freedom of thought in regard to them was infidelity."

You say further—"The ordinances of baptism and the supper are positive institutions. . . . A positive institution I understand to be an institution set, directed, ordered or commanded—not an institution based on natural or eternal law." And you cite R. W. Cushman, who says, "Baptism is a positive institution, that is, it is obligatory simply because it is commanded. The obligation to observe a positive command, does not rest at all on any natural fitness of the act required."

These quotations are, by the writer, deemed important. Indeed, I would that what you have said, in the main, up to this time on this subject, were an appended introduction to my succeeding remarks. Not solely, that the antitype or substance which these types or figures were designed to represent, is so great; an ordinance or shadow of great things, being comparatively small; but because these ordinances have become thus magnified in the minds of the church.

You repeat, "Brother Baldwin's question is to know whether Christ designed them to be continued beyond the apostolic age." You answer, "I find nothing in the scriptures going to settle that point one way or the other."

At this, Mr. B. expresses much surprise, saying, (No. 49.) "It does appear to me as though this sentiment impeaches the character of Christ. What! Christ establish an ordinance and leave it altogether to men to decide whether it shall be attended to or not? . . . Let us turn to the scripture upon this subject." The writer conceding to friend Baldwin's remarks.

With the Editor's indulgence, and this preliminary, I ask of friend Baldwin a listening ear, and specific reply to this letter. And first—

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

"I have designed to eat this passover with you before I suffer: for I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof until it be fulfilled in [the coming of] the kingdom of God."—Luke xxii: 15. That such is his meaning, the reader will notice his language concerning the wine. "For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. And he took the bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me."

This is my body which is given for you. Interpretation, Matt. xx: 28—"To give his life a ransom for many." That the Savior alluded to his sacrifice, is rendered certain by the words broken, used by the Apostle, instead of given, above—(1 Cor. xii: 24.) "This is my body which is broken for you."

Thus Luke xx: 20: "This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you."

"This do in remembrance of me." In this is given the object—in remembrance—but the time is not given. Hence the inquiry, How long "do this?" Of course, "till the Son of man be come."—Matt. x: 23.

Friend Baldwin: Is not that the answer? Said the Apostle, "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death [body broken] till he come." 1 Cor. xi: 26.

Again—"I will not any more eat thereof until it be fulfilled in the coming of the kingdom of God." But fulfilled how, or in what way? It will be recollected that the ordinance from which the supper originated was called the passover: for that God, on "seeing the blood, would pass over the children of Israel and destroy the first-born of Pharaoh, together with his armies." So Christ, when he should come in his king-

dom, delivering his disciples, Israel according to the spirit, He would destroy the unbelieving. As it is written, "Every soul which will not hear that prophet shall be destroyed from among the people."—Acts iii: 23. On the other hand, said he, "Fear not little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."—Luke xii: 32.

Friend: Am I correct thus far? Do not the words of Jesus, and of the Apostle imply, that this ordinance should be kept till his coming? Does either teach a further use?

"Till it be fulfilled." Do not all types, shadows, figures or ordinances, end at fulfillment and not before? Said the Savior, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."—Matt. v: 17, 18.

We shall all agree that he alluded to the ceremonial law, so called. And that the law of ordinances, being figurative, was fulfilled in the Savior's first coming, passed away, ended. Then, what remains in the discussion of this point, but to ascertain the time of the coming of the kingdom of God. The scriptures often speak to this point, (and to them you appeal): then what is the meaning of your language? Friend—are you prepared still, to rely on, not a mysterious, but simple interpretation of the words of scripture, should you perceive them to contain a sentiment wide from what you have hitherto received?

The time is fast approaching, and now is, when the scriptures must undergo a re-examination, and church creeds pass the ordeal of discussion—not by the enemies of the cross of Christ, nor by a time-serving ministry. Neither by infidels, made so as well by preaching, from the scriptures, doctrines which are not contained in the scriptures, as by the ungodly lives of professed Christians—but they will pass the scrutiny of men of discriminating minds, good hearts, enlightened and enlarged understandings.

Dear Brother—for I am not at a loss as to your heart, but—Are you prepared in mind to sit at the feet of Christ—to search out facts known, and believed in that generation in which he lost his life, and previous: also, to observe the use of words in those days; and, to now yield to what then must have been the honest—the unavoidable convictions of your own mind, had you lived at that time? No doubt you answer, yes.

THE COMING OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

He added and spake a parable, [note] because he was nigh to Jerusalem. (a proof that the establishment of "his heavenly kingdom" would affect that city), and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear.—Luke xii: 11, 12.

"He said, therefore, a certain nobleman went into a far country." Then, they had long prayed, "Thy kingdom come," yet it would not then immediately appear. Verse 15—"When he was returned, [notice] having received the kingdom, then he commanded those servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money. Verse 27—"But those mine enemies, which would not (as at verse 14,) that I should rule over them, bring hither and slay them before me." There is no dodging the light of this parable in respect to the time of the coming of the kingdom of God. To close the eyes is the only way to escape being enlightened on examination of it.

All men admit that the nobleman is representative of the Savior: hence, being crucified he goes to God, and receiving—not a civil but heavenly kingdom—returns at the time appointed of the Father, and confers it on his "little flock"—the saints. As said the prophet, "The time came that the saints possessed the kingdom."—Dan. vii: 22. Then, is it not evident, (as the same citizens, who would not that Jesus should rule over them, were slain at his return) that this was fulfilled more than 1700 years ago? See Matt. xxii: 7, and the connection: "He sent forth his armies and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city." To fix the time beyond dispute, see Luke xxii: 24—30, followed by these words, "When ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the [coming of the] kingdom of God is nigh at hand. Verily, I say unto you, this generation shall not pass away till all be fulfilled." About forty years previous to the burning of Jerusalem, John the Baptist commenced his ministry with these words: "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." At the time referred to above, when nigh at hand, were fulfilled, the words of the Savior to the rulers of Israel, "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof."—Matt. xxi: 43. Thus, Judaism being destroyed, when but that time "was heard a loud voice saying, in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God and the power of his Christ; for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused

them before our God day and night."—Rev. xii: 10.

At creation, "The morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." But at what era but the foregoing did God proclaim, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. . . . Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the king of glory shall come in?"—Ps. xxiv: 7, 9.

CAPHAS.

P. S. At the deliverance of God's people from Egyptian bondage, "sang Moses and the children of Israel" a song. To which Miriam, the prophetess, and all the women responded with timbrels & dances. Ex. xv: 20. But when Israel were delivered from the persecution of the rulers of the world, and the powers of darkness were dethroned—when the kingdom [by Moses] was purged of its hypocrites, its serpents, and a generation of vipers—the Son of man having come in his kingdom, and all the holy angels with him, "a nation being born in a day," "They sang a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us to our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth."—Rev. v: 9, 10. Verse 12: "Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing." But at verse 13 the inspired Poet himself, filled with rejoicing, makes wide creation join in praises, saying, "And every creature which is in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I, saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, forever and ever. And the four beasts said, Amen."

Is it not worthy of remark that, at the establishment of the kingdom of Christ in the earth, which restored a primitive walk with God, as at the beginning, it being the most auspicious of events recorded in sacred history, higher expressions of rejoicing burst forth—greater acclamations of praise were sung, than on any previous occasion? Christendom, however, have since lost, or fallen from that state—have so polluted the kingdom of Christ with iniquity, and the church with blood, that scarce a footstep of the Redeemer is seen—scarce a trace of the true church remains. Hence, but for scripture testimony of what should succeed that age, no man would believe that a New, a spiritual Jerusalem, did "come down from God out of heaven" at the destruction of the Old.

To close. As it respects the ordinances of the Supper and Baptism, let no Christian brother or sister neglect, despise or speak lightly of them. All understand that ordinances are not spiritual realities, but they represent spiritual things. He does not neglect them, strictly speaking, though he stop not to observe them, who continually maintains a walk with God, daily living out their fulfillment. To sons of God restored to the "Garden," it would be a stopping, a retarding their progress heavenward—glorifying God less, and doing less for the salvation of man, to attend an ordinance, (for there were no ordinances in Eden,) doing much less than to be acting out in life, that spirituality which ordinances but faintly represent.

Friend Baldwin, J. J. Trumbull, or others, who shall discover error in the sentiments offered: Let me soon hear from you, that light may come to the people. If not found in error, in the foregoing, thoughts long entertained by the writer, on the ordinance of baptism, will first be offered to the Telegraph, for the candid and deliberate attention of its patrons; hoping that you will be faithful to your highest good—faithful to Him who hath given to the inner man wisdom and understanding—faithful to the cause of truth in the kingdom of Christ; which announced "peace on earth and good will to men;" i. e. of man towards his fellow.

"AMERICAN NOTES, FOR GENERAL CIRCULATION,"—By Charles Dickens.

This is a work published by Dickens, since his return from his late tour in the United States.—It is republished in a "New-World Extra," at New-York. Below is the beginning of his chapter on American Slavery.

SLAVERY.

The upholders of slavery in America—of the atrocities of which system, I shall not write one word for which I have not ample proof and warrant—may be divided into three great classes.

The first, are those more moderate and rational owners of human cattle, who have come into the possession of them as so many coins in their trading capital, but who admit the frightful nature of the Institution in the abstract, and perceive the dangers of society with which it is fraught; dangers which however distant they may

be, or howsoever tardy in their coming on, are as certain to fall upon its guilty head, as is the Day of Judgment.

The second, consists of all those owners, breeders, users, buyers and sellers of slaves, who will, until the bloody chapter has a bloody end, own, breed, use, buy, and sell them at all hazards; who doggedly deny the horrors of the system, in the teeth of such a mass of evidence as never was brought to bear on any other subject, and to which the experience of every day contributes its immense amount; who would at this or any other moment, gladly involve America in a war, civil, or foreign, provided that it had for its sole end and object the assertion of their right to perpetuate slavery, and to whip and torture slaves, unquestioned by any human authority, and unassailed by any human power: who, when they speak of Freedom, mean the Freedom to oppress their kind, and to be savage, merciless, and cruel; and of whom every man on his ground, in republican America, is a more exacting, and sterner, and a less responsible despot, than the Caliph Haroun Alraschid in his angry robe of scarlet.

The third, and not the least numerous or influential, is composed of all that delicate gentility which cannot bear a superior, and cannot brook an equal; of that class whose Republicanism means, "I will not tolerate a man above me: and of those below, none must approach too near;" whose pride, in a land where voluntary servitude is shunned as a disgrace, must be ministered to by slaves; and whose inalienable rights can only have their growth in negro wrongs.

It has been sometimes urged that, in the unavailing efforts which have been made to advance the cause of Human Freedom in the republic of America (strange cause for history to treat of!) sufficient regard has not been had to the existence of the first class of persons; and it has been confounded with the second. This is, no doubt, the case; noble instances of pecuniary and personal sacrifice have already had their growth among them; and it is much to be regretted that the gulf between them and the advocates of emancipation should have been widened and deepened by any means: the rather, as there are, beyond dispute, among these slave owners, many kind masters who are tender in the exercise of their unnatural power. Still it is to be feared that this injustice is inseparable from the state of things with which humanity and truth are called upon to deal. Slavery is not a whit the more endurable because some hearts are to be found which can partially resist its hardening influences; nor can the indignant tide of honest wrath stand still, because in its onward course it overwhelms a few who are comparatively innocent, among a host of guilty.

The ground most commonly taken by these better men among the advocates of slavery, is this: "It is a bad system; and for myself I would willingly get rid of it, if I could; most willingly. But it is not so bad, as you in England take it to be.—You are deceived by the representations of the emancipationists. The greater part of my slaves are most attached to me.—You will say that I do not allow them to be severely treated, but I will put it to you whether you believe that it can be a general practice to treat them inhumanly, when it would impair their value, and would be obviously against the interests of their masters."

Is it the interest of any man, to steal, to game, to waste his health and mental faculties by drunkenness, to lie, forswear himself, indulge hatred, seek desperate revenge, or do murder? No. All these are roads to ruin. And why, then, do men tread them? Because such inclinations are among the vicious qualities of mankind. Blot out ye friends of slavery, from the catalogue of human passions, brutal lust, cruelty, and the abuse of irresponsible power (of all earthly temptations the most difficult to be resisted,) and when ye have done so, and not before, we will inquire whether it be the interest of a master to lash and maim the slaves, over whose lives and limbs he has an absolute control.

But again: this class, together with the last one I have named, the miserable aristocracy spawned of a false republic, lift up their voices and exclaim, "Public opinion is all sufficient to prevent such cruelty as you denounce." Public opinion! Why, public opinion in the slave States is slavery, is it not? Public opinion, in the slave States, has delivered the slaves over, to the gentle mercies of their master. Public opinion has made the laws, and denied them legislative protection. Public opinion has knotted the lash, heated the branding-iron, loaded the rifle, and shielded the murderer. Public opinion threatens the abolitionist with death, if he venture to the South; and drags him with a rope about his middle, in broad unblushing noon, through the first city in the East. Public opinion has, within a few years, burned a slave alive at a slow fire in the city of St. Louis; and public opinion has to this day maintained upon the bench that estimable Judge who charged the Jury, impelled there to try his murderers, that their most horrid deed was an act of public opinion, and being so, must not be punished by the laws the public sentiment has made. Public opinion hailed this doctrine with a howl of wild applause, and set the prisoners free, to walk the city, men of mark, and influence, and station, as they had been before.

Public opinion! what class of men have an innate preponderance over the rest